

April 6, 1977

LB 504, 196, 232

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Simon asks unanimous consent to print amendments to LB 196 in the Legislative Journal. LB 232. Read title. There are no committee amendments or other amendments pending.

PRESIDENT: Senator Luedtke, Senator Maresh wanted to pass over LB 504. The Legislature should be advised that your presiding officer appeared as a witness in favor of this bill in committee. I did and it may not be appropriate for me to preside. If there is any objection, I would ask the Speaker to come forward and preside. Senator Fowler.

SENATOR FOWLER: Did we resolve that question, do you think?

PRESIDENT: For now.

SENATOR FOWLER: LB 232 is a bill to write into state law the existence of a State Energy Office and the bill was drafted to basically take the current office and its current arrangement with its current powers and to basically make that the structure in this. The reason for a bill was to insure that the state does continue to have an energy office. Right now it exists as a fuel allocation office through executive order of the Governor. This would make it an agency or part of an agency, as the bill is written, that could last into additional administrations of the executive. Some of the functions of the "E" office is to serve as a central repository for energy information, to analyze present, future energy needs of the state, carry out energy conservation measures, design a state program for conservation, prepare and adopt emergency allocation of energy plan. These are things that are being done now. I think that we all understand that this is a pretty critical issue. We have had several resolutions in this Legislature, some in just the past few days dealing with the question of energy. I don't think there is much doubt that we need someone in state government that will be responsible for energy policy and to try and get the state moving in the area of energy conservation. This is the function of this bill. The money is already in the budget. We have appropriated every year funds to the fuel allocation office so there is no additional fiscal impact with this bill. I would move it be advanced.

SPEAKER LUEDTKE PRESIDING

SPEAKER LUEDTKE: The Chair recognizes Senator Duis.

SENATOR DUIS: Mr. President, a question of Senator Fowler.

SPEAKER LUEDTKE: Senator Fowler, will you reply?

SENATOR FOWLER: Sure.

SENATOR DUIS: Senator Fowler, you say this is included in the budget. Now do you mean the Governor's budget?

SENATOR FOWLER: Yes, it was in the Governor's budget request and Appropriations Committee included the money that the Governor requested for this office.

SENATOR DUIS: I turn over to my financial status report and